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LETTER DATED 18 NOVEMBER 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 17 November 1999 from Mr. Mohammed Said Al-Sahaf, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq. The Minister calls your attention to a fresh act of aggression by Turkish armed forces against northern Iraq in which serious harm was done to Iraqi citizens in terms of loss of life and property damage and to the fact that additional forces have been deployed along the Iraq-Turkey borders for the purpose of engaging in wide-scale military aggression inside Iraqi territory. He requests you to do your utmost to urge the Turkish Government to comply with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law by withdrawing its armed forces from Iraq's territory forthwith.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Saeed H. HASAN
Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter dated 17 November 1999 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General

Further to my letter dated 5 October 1999 addressed to you (S/1999/1028, annex), I should like to call your attention to the fact that a Turkish army unit consisting of 20 tanks has entered northern Iraq from the Durnuk area of Turkey heading towards the Batutah and Kani Masi areas. At the same time, Turkey has deployed additional forces in the Çakırca border area in readiness to enter Iraqi territory for the purpose of engaging in wide-scale military aggression. Turkish military engineering units, together with Turkish civilian construction companies, have also built a Bailey bridge on the Zab River inside our national territory. At the same time, the units of the Turkish armed forces already inside Iraqi territory have been continuing their military operations in the Jabal Matin and Jabal Karah areas with the support of helicopters, armoured personnel carriers and tanks. The aggression has thus caused serious losses in terms of lives and property to Iraqi citizens among our Kurdish people in the area, to say nothing of the damage done to public property.

The Government of Iraq protests in the strongest terms against this violation of its territory and airspace by the Turkish armed forces, and it calls upon the Turkish Government to withdraw its invading forces from Iraqi territory forthwith and to desist from any repetition of practices that are incompatible with relations of good neighbourliness and the principles of international law and of the Charter of the United Nations. It further rejects outright the pretexts advanced by Turkey to justify these acts of aggression against northern Iraq, given that the alleged pursuit of elements that pose a threat to Turkish national security does not make it legitimate for Turkey to adopt policies that are entirely at variance with its declared commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq.

The Government of Iraq reserves the right to seek compensation for the damage caused by these unlawful actions, it renews its call to the Government of Turkey to bring an immediate halt to operations that violate Iraq's sovereignty and place its security and integrity in great jeopardy, and it urges Turkey to give concrete expression to its professed respect for the norms of good neighbourliness between States.

As I express the hope that the United Nations will fulfil its responsibilities as stipulated in the Charter and will halt the constant intimidation and aggression to which my country is being subjected, I request you to do your utmost to urge the Turkish Government to comply with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law by withdrawing its armed forces from Iraq's territory forthwith.

(Signed) Mohammed Said AL-SAHAF
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Iraq